

Top U.S. Officials Reported Targets

Libya Killer Squad Concerns Reagan

By Martin Schram

Washington Post Staff Writer

President Reagan said yesterday that he takes seriously and is "concerned" about a U.S. intelligence report that a five-person Libyan assassination squad has entered the United States on a mission to kill him or his top advisers.

Acting after an informant provided U.S. officials with what one intelligence source called an unconfirmed warning of an assassination plot, the president ordered Secret Service protection Thursday for his three top White House advisers: chief of staff James A. Baker III, counselor Edwin Meese III and deputy chief of staff Michael K. Deaver.

Extra security precautions have also been in effect in recent weeks for the protection of the president, Vice President Bush, Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr. and Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger, after earlier reported threats that they were marked for assassination by terrorists trained in Libya.

Now, informed sources said, agents of the Secret Service and FBI are working throughout the country to try to track down an alleged assassination squad that was said by one informant to have entered the United States this past weekend with orders to kill the president or his advisers.

"...there is a threat to them that has been made rather obvious," Reagan said yesterday in confirming he has ordered security protection for his top aides.

He added, "Obviously you'd have to be concerned about... all the people that have been named in this."

Asked if he takes the threat seriously, Reagan responded, "I think

you have to. I think it safe to say that in any security case, even when security gets what they think is a crank call, they can't take that for granted."

Intelligence sources familiar with the case said that within the last few days an informant who is not an American has given authorities the names of five people who he claimed were members of a Libyan assassination squad. The informant also reportedly claimed to have been involved in the planning for the assassination effort. But intelligence sources stressed that the credibility of the informant has not been ascertained nor has this story been verified.

Another intelligence source added, "We frankly don't know whether it is fact or fiction. But we can't afford to think in terms of how well he [the informant] is to be trusted. We have got to think in terms of it can't be dispelled, so we have got to act."

The New York Times first reported yesterday that an informant had told U.S. authorities about a five-person Libyan assassination team that allegedly entered the United States last weekend.

Last night, ABC News reported that U.S. intelligence officials have "partially identified, with names and pictures," some of those believed to be the Libyan agents.

At the White House, where memories of the March 30 shooting of the president and the critical wounding of press secretary James S. Brady are still painfully fresh, the matter is being treated seriously.

The press office yesterday issued a statement saying that members of the president's staff had met with and telephoned representatives of major news organizations to request that the media exercise "restraint in reporting and televising specific security measures utilized in the protection of the president and others."

Washington editors and managers for The New York Times, Washington Post, ABC, CBS and NBC said their organizations would act with restraint in reporting security measures.

Federal investigators are reviewing case files on two former U.S. intelligence agents who have been indicted for pro-

viding terrorist equipment and training to Libya in order to track down former military and intelligence agents who have worked in Libya, according to one federal official.

This source said the case files of indicted fugitives Edwin P. Wilson and Francis E. Terpil are not being reviewed because authorities have linked them with the alleged assassination team that is said to have entered the United States.

Rather, he said, federal officials are seeking all available information on sources who might be able to provide details of terrorist or assassin training in Libya.

The Libyan news agency Jana, monitored in Beirut by Reuter news agency, charged last night that the Reagan administration was disseminating a "series of lies" in commenting on the reports that a Libyan-trained assassination team had landed in the United States.

"The American claims and series of lies to which the American administration resorts in its foreign policy stem basically from hatred and intolerance, and clearly reflect the American terrorist line against the people of the [Libyan] Jamahiriya," the agency said.

United Press International, meanwhile, carried an unconfirmed report that Lebanese security sources said Libyan gunmen planned to assassinate Reagan's special envoy, Philip Habib, during his current visit to the Mideast. But Lebanese Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan was quoted by Reuter as saying yesterday he had received no such reports from security sources.

Staff writers Patrick E. Tyler and Charles R. Babcock contributed to this report.

Libyan-Trained Assassin Squad Reported in U.S.

Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi has long been convinced that Washington is out to get him. Apparently, he has decided to get Washington first. According to information received by Federal law enforcement officials and reported by The New York Times, a hit squad of five Libyan-trained terrorists entered the United States last weekend with plans to assassinate President Reagan, other senior Administration officials and members of their families.

An informant was said to have given first-hand accounts of the training of the assassins and details of their plans. They included, intelligence officials said, plots to kill the President by shooting down Air Force One with a surface-to-air missile or by blowing up the President's limousine.

Once dismissed as the ravings of a crackpot, Colonel Qaddafi's threats lost their capacity to amuse when he dispatched hit squads around Europe and the Middle East last year. They killed a half-dozen Libyan dissidents. One near-victim was a Libyan national in Colorado. The man accused of the shooting, a former Green Beret, Eugene Aloys Tafaya, was convicted last week on misdemeanor charges of assault.

Since American planes shot down two Libyan jet fighters over Libyan-claimed waters in August, Colonel Qaddafi has been threatening to exact revenge. Libya was suspected as the instigator of the attempted assassination last month of the American chargé d'affaires in Paris and of a plan to kill the American Ambassador to Italy.

The Nation

Summary

Law-enforcement agents were deployed around the country to hunt for the assassination team. Agents questioned Americans with past links to Libya, including former Green Berets recruited by a former C.I.A. man, Edwin P. Wilson, to train terrorists in Libya. There was no evidence that the would-be Presidential assassins had been trained by Mr. Wilson's recruits. President Reagan acknowledged he was taking the threats seriously and said that security had been tightened for senior officials. The White House asked news organizations to refrain from reporting details of the new security measures.

Michael Wright
and Carollee Rand Herron

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A32

THE WASHINGTON POST
6 December 1981

Libya Labels Assassin Reports Product of 'CIA Fantasy Farm'

TRIPOLI, Libya, Dec. 5 (AP) — The Libyan government today described American news reports that it sent an assassination team to kill President Reagan as products of "the CIA fantasy farm."

"Let me state categorically and unequivocally that there is no such hit team working under orders from the Libyan Jamahiriyah" — the Libyan name for the country — said Khalifa Azzabi, director of foreign information.

Azzabi accused Washington of waging a "disinformation campaign" to destabilize Muammar Qaddafi's government and said Western news media "appear to operate as an annex of the CIA rather than the disseminator of facts and news."

Security for Reagan and three top aides has been stepped up following the reports, which said the assassination team may have crossed from Canada into the United States. At

least two informants have provided details of the alleged Libyan plot to U.S. government agents, a reliable source in Washington said.

Qaddafi reportedly was enraged after U.S. Navy jets shot down two Libyan reconnaissance planes over disputed waters 50 miles off the Libyan coast in August. The United States said its planes were under attack. Another supposed motive was anger over reports that the CIA wanted to kill Qaddafi.

[The FBI, Secret Service and other law enforcement agencies are saying little about the tip from an informant — who was reported to have said he helped train terrorists in Libya — that an assassination team has entered the country, United Press International reported from Washington. "There are no developments," an FBI spokesman said deflecting questions on possible arrests and a nationwide investigation.]

Press and TV Are Asked to Curb Reports on Protection for Reagan

By HOWELL RAINES

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 4 — The White House has asked major news organizations to refrain from reporting details of measures taken to protect President Reagan.

The requests were made by James A. Baker 3d, the White House chief of staff, in telephone calls and meetings Thursday night and today with editors and executives of major newspapers, news services and television networks.

The President said today that he took seriously the reports that a team of terrorists trained in Libya had infiltrated the United States with plans to kill him or other senior Administration officials.

In remarks to reporters in the Oval Office today, Mr. Reagan confirmed that he had ordered extra security protection for his top aides, saying "there is a threat to them that has been made rather obvious."

'Concerned About Everyone'

"Obviously, you'd have to be concerned about everyone and all the people that have been named in this," he said, referring to a report today in The New York Times that American intelligence agencies believe five Libyan-trained terrorists may have slipped into the United States.

Asked if he had expressed his concern to Muammar el-Qaddafi, the leader of Libya, the President replied, "I think he figures that I'm concerned, but no — as you know, I hope you understand, we

don't talk about security measures and situations of this kind."

In a briefing on intelligence matters at the White House today, a senior Administration official suggested that the Libyan activity might have been stimulated by news reports in the American press.

The official noted that United States regulations on intelligence operations prevented its security agencies from participating in assassination attempts against foreign leaders. Nevertheless, he added, two press reports had indicated that the Central Intelligence Agency was planning to kill Colonel Qaddafi.

"These reports had no factual basis," the official said, "but they may well have helped to stir some of the Libyan activity we are now seeing."

White House Requests 'Restraint'

Mr. Baker's contacts with news organizations centered on the request by the White House that there be no disclosure of measures taken to protect Mr. Reagan from threats such as that posed by the reported Libyan agents.

Mr. Baker talked with officials of The Times, The Los Angeles Times, The Washington Post, ABC, NBC, United Press International, The Associated Press, Independent Television Network and the Cable News Network.

"The purpose of the meeting was to request restraint in reporting and televising specific security measures utilized in the protection of the President and others," the White House statement said.

A. M. Rosenthal, executive editor of The New York Times who spoke with Mr. Baker this morning, said: "Our policy is not to print the details of security arrangements or other information that might weaken the President's security. That has been our policy for years."

Libya Accuses U.S. of Lying

BEIRUT, Lebanon, Dec. 4 (Reuters) — The Libyan Government press agency Jana accused the Reagan Administration tonight of resorting to lies in its foreign policy.

The official agency was commenting on reports that the Federal Bureau of Investigation had begun a nationwide search for Libyan-trained assassins posing a threat to President Reagan and other officials.

"The American claims and series of lies to which the American Administration resorts in its foreign policy stem

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Dismissed Federal Aide Is Restored to His Post

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 4 (AP) — The Justice Department on Thursday reinstated Assistant United States Attorney Robert M. Smith, who contended that he had been removed from his job for political reasons.

James Brosnahan, Mr. Smith's attorney, said he and Mr. Smith reached an agreement with the department for Mr. Smith to return to his job just an hour before they planned to go to Federal court seeking the reinstatement.

Mr. Smith's dismissal on Nov. 25 was rescinded and he was back on the job immediately, Mr. Brosnahan said.

Mr. Smith had been a top press aide to former Attorney General Benjamin R. Civiletti in the Carter administration.

Arthur Brill, deputy director of public affairs for the Justice Department, said last week that to his knowledge Mr. Smith was the only one of the 177 Assistant United States Attorneys who had been removed from his post for political reasons.